

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor and the steps taken by the Government to curb/ban the excessive use of pesticides/chemicals in agriculture sector which are harmful for health?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI) : (a) and (b) The residues of pesticides do not cause any known health hazards and pollution problems, if used as per recommendations. All the pesticides containers have labels and leaflets incorporating the approved usage as per Insecticides Act, 1968 and the rules framed thereunder. These usages are approved by the Registration Committee constituted under the Insecticides Act, 1968.

(c) and (d) Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) under the Deptt. of Food & Consumer Affairs specifies and publishes standards of spraying equipment. Both Central and State Governments undertake various programmes to educate the farmers about proper use of pesticides in the agricultural sector.

(e) The following steps are being taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to reduce the excessive use of pesticides/chemicals in agricultural sector:—

- (i) Banning of 20 pesticides including some of the persistent pesticides.
- (ii) Restricting the use of 13 pesticides to avoid problem of pesticide residue and health hazard.
- (iii) Promoting Integrated Pest Management (IPM) encompassing cultural, mechanical, biological control methods and need-based use of chemical pesticides for the benefit of farmers.
- (iv) Advocating use of bio-pesticides including neem based pesticides and pheromones.
- (v) Imparting training to farmers and the extension workers on IPM technologies.
- (vi) Conducting IPM demonstrations on various crops for the benefit of farmers and extension workers.

[English]

#### **Insurance Scheme**

997. SHRI MURALIDHAR JENA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to introduce compulsory group insurance of people living in the coastal areas against cyclone, flood, earthquake etc.;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether this scheme is applicable to the people living in the coastal areas of the Orissa State; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI) : (a) to (c) No, Sir. A Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) with an average annual allocation of Rs. 1260.00 crores has been constituted for relief and rehabilitation measures in the wake of natural calamities. Financial assistance to the families of people who die in the wake of natural calamities is also provided from this Fund, in addition to assistance from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund. Under the Group Accident Insurance Component of the National Welfare of Fishermen Scheme, upto 11.50 lakh active fishermen were insured against death and permanent/partial disability by accident during the Eighth Plan period.

(d) and (e) Orissa has a CRF allocation of Rs. 258.01 crores for the period 1995-96 to 1999-2000. One lakh active fishermen in the State were insured during the Eighth Plan period against death and disability by accident.

#### **Intra-venous Fluids**

998. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that high margin of more than 100 per cent is being charged by the stockists on intra-venous fluids;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is proposal under consideration of the Government to put intra-venous fluids under the price control;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) to (e) Govt. is seized of

the issue of high trade margins in the case of intravenous fluids. The feasibility of bringing some of the commonly used intravenous fluids under price control is being examined.

#### Misappropriation of Rice from FCI

999. SHRI AMAR PAL SINGH : Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether during the last year, a case of misappropriation of more than 5500 metric tonne of rice in Food Corporation of India has come to the notice of the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have enquired into the matter;

(d) if so, the findings thereof; and

(e) the action taken or proposed to be taken against the guilty officials?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Food Corporation of India recently detected a case wherein two transport contractors, appointed for transporting foodgrains namely M/s Gautam Associates, Mohali and M/s Yajen Aier & Co., Pehowa had not delivered 4368 MT and 1543 MT of rice worth Rs. 4.25 crores, lifted by them for transportation ex-Kaithal and Pehowa respectively to Imphal (Manipur).

(c) to (e) On the basis of preliminary investigations the Food Corporation of India has placed under suspension its one District Manager and 6 Assistant Managers. F.I.R. has been lodged against the defaulting contractors for misappropriation of foodgrains. With the approval of the Government, the FCI has referred the case to Central Bureau of Investigation on 14.7.1997 for detailed investigations and retrieval of misappropriated rice.

#### Illegal Trade on Indo-Bangladesh Border

1000. PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the thriving illegal trade in commodities like salt, sugar, rice and cloths in the border areas of Bangladesh;

(b) if so, whether the Government have made any assessment of the illegal border trade;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the measures taken by the Government to check these clandestine operations in the Indo-Bangladesh border areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) Government are aware that some illegal trade in commodities like salt, sugar, rice and clothes take place in the Indo-Bangladesh border areas.

(b) and (c) Although no exact figures on quantum of foodgrains smuggled to Bangladesh are available, the seizures of essential commodities made by the Border Security Force deployed on Indo-Bangladesh border during the last three years are as follows:

Item	1995	1996	1997 (upto 30 June)
Salt (Kg)	1245838	1699625	1126571
Sugar (Kg)	855447	1567774	867472
Rice (Kg)	2000548	783102	99503
Cloth: (Worth Rupees)	35129536	30524120	18956963

(d) A number of measures including reduction of gaps between Border Out Posts, intensification and increase in Patrols, erection of Observation Post Towers, use of night vision devices, construction of border roads and fences along sensitive stretches have been taken to check smuggling.

#### National Commission for Minorities

1001. SHRI MADHUKAR SARPOTDAR :  
SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR :

Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Commission for Minorities has initiated a comprehensive study to identify the social, economic, educational, cultural and the other problems being faced by the major religious minorities of the country and to suggest measures for their solution;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the details of the panel constituted for the purpose;